

Food Notes | The Newsletter of Food for People The Food Bank of Humboldt County

WINTER ISSUE 2019



Rio Dell Pantry volunteers Clarice Cole (left) and Judy Ingraham (right) mingle at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Party at Sequoia Park. More on page 9.

IN THIS ISSUE |

- End Hunger During
- Power Outage and

Notes from the Director

Locally Focused

By Anne Holcomb, Executive Director

We've all seen the slogans that encourage us to stop and think about how our eating and purchasing habits impact the health and sustainability of our local economy. They include "eat local," "locally grown," "local food challenge," "buy local," "support local businesses," etc. and have helped put the focus on how our consumption of locally grown foods supports local farmers and ranchers, and reduces our collective carbon footprint by reducing the distance those foods travel from farm to plate. Purchasing goods and services locally has a similar impact, and helps create jobs and support the businesses that make up the character of our community.

Food for People has a strong commitment to this "localized" perspective for a number of reasons. First and foremost is that we could never accomplish all that we do without the support we receive from our local community! The food and financial donations we receive from individuals and businesses alike comprise a significant portion of our operational strength, and make it possible for us to serve roughly 10% of our county's population within a service area that encompasses all 4,000 square miles of Humboldt County.

We also want our community to know that we try to live this philosophy in every aspect of our operations. Below are a few examples of how we make that happen:

- Last year, we spent \$740,891 locally in the following categories: food purchases from farmers, ranchers and grocery stores; rent for offsite warehouse space; food handling, office and cleaning supplies; gas, diesel and propane fuel for our vehicles and forklifts; plus electrical, plumbing, building repair, landscaping, insurance, copier and computer services.

- Just under half of our budget covers personnel costs to employ and provide benefits for local residents who live and shop here. They help us manage our 18 programs as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible while remaining compliant with all local, state and federal regulations. They help us achieve a clean financial audit with no findings and receive a Gold Star rating from GuideStar Charity Navigator. They also help ensure that we pass annual monitoring evaluations and site inspections from entities such as USDA, California Department of Social Services, California Department of Education and Feeding America with flying colors.

- Donations of time and talent from our volunteers, who work shoulder to shoulder alongside our staff, make an enormous difference and the number of hours they donate annually represents the equivalent of 14 full time staff positions!

The bottom line is that 83% of our total budget stays right here in the local economy. The remaining 17% is spent on purchases outside Humboldt, primarily through Sysco because they provide direct delivery of bulk quantities of food which



Anne Holcomb,

seems to be an especially critical time. We've seen a 20-30% dip in retail sales over the last year, and from the decline of cash flowing into the economy, already an increasing number of businesses are struggling. We're dealing with the impact of the pandemic on those same businesses that were thriving before. Grocery stores are just one sector of the economy that it was heartbreaking to see them struggle with. Items at a discount before having to close. Under normal circumstances, if they would call us to pick up and work to get the problem fixed, the same scenario and couldn't tell someone is working to quantify the impact together on future strategies to move forward.

In closing, I invite you to join us in supporting our local community and economy. Our mission is to provide the food that we need to maintain their ability to grow and succeed and we can't accomplish this without businesses as key partners in building a resilient local economy.

With gratitude and best wishes,

Anne Holcomb

In the last fiscal year, close to 57,000 pounds of fresh, local food has been collected from local ranches, farmers, and gardeners throughout Humboldt County.

A Bountiful Season

Thank You To Local Farmers, Ranchers and Gardeners

By Allison Kenney, Local Food Resources Coordinator

This growing season has certainly been a bountiful one for Food for People. In the last fiscal year, close to 57,000 pounds of fresh, local food has been collected from ranchers, farmers, and gardeners throughout Humboldt County.

Our generous farming community has once again stepped up this season to help ensure that usable food doesn't go to waste by working with our team to get it to the food bank and into the hands of people who can use it. Between on-farm field harvests, surplus produce pickups and drop-offs, and donations collected at local farmers' markets, Food for People has been blessed with a plethora of local produce. Deep Seeded Community Farm and Redwood Roots have been offering extra produce weekly for our staff to pick up and bring back for distribution. Other farms like Little River Farm and Humboldt Hydro Farm have been dropping off surplus produce at our warehouse periodically during their usual delivery routes. Mad River Community Hospital Farm, Flora Organica, and Deep Seeded Farm invited us out to harvest directly from their farms on several occasions.

Local gardeners have also been busy this season, growing, harvesting, and delivering produce straight to our doors. Many of our garden donors come in regularly to

broccoli, melons and more. We appreciate the generosity of our local gardeners who help us to help our friends and neighbors in need.

Volunteers and staff have been busy this season as well, gleaning leftovers from on-farm distribution and of course harvesting fruit from local residents. It has been a particularly busy year, and we've received many glean requests with backyard fruit trees. Our glean team is working at full tilt into the fall, trying to meet as many glean requests as possible so that food gets to those who need it. We couldn't do this without the generous gift of time, help, and support on the part of our wonderful volunteers who help us to cover so much ground. (And we couldn't do this without you being able to drop off the fruit directly to us.)

A huge thank you to all of the farmers, ranchers, and gardeners who work so hard to grow food for our communities, and who keep a place for us at the food bank and the folks we serve. You are part of the solution and sharing your time and talent this growing season begins to wind down, but your impact will last.

The Joy of Giving

Help Us End Hunger This Holiday Season

The holiday season is upon us, and at Food for People, we're gearing up again for our annual Holiday Spirit Food & Fund Drive. This is our largest and most widespread effort of the year, running from early November through December and engaging communities across Humboldt County. Nearly 100 different businesses, organizations and groups participate. These annual efforts bring in more than half of Food for People's total food drive donations for the year – more than 127,000 pounds of food last year!

During this time of year, we are reminded to reflect on our blessings, and express appreciation for what we have. As we make plans to see loved ones, eat good food, and celebrate, it's important to remember that for some, the holidays can be a difficult time. For those struggling to make ends meet, the expense of gifts and the pressure of preparing a special holiday meal for loved ones can be challenging. Let's bring holiday spirit comes in. Help make the holidays a little easier for families struggling to put food on the table by participating in our Annual Holiday Spirit Food & Fund Drive.

Fill a Bag

Make sure to keep an eye out for our special red & white donation bags in the Times-Standard during the week of Thanksgiving. Fill up your paper bag with nutritious, non-perishable foods and drop it off at your nearest donation site! Didn't get a bag but still want to donate? Give us a call, and we'll send you some bags, or you can visit www.foodforpeople.org for a full list of donation drop-off sites. We work hard to make sure that donations made in a community stay in that community and partner closely with our countywide Pantry Network to make that happen.

Hunger Fighter Challenge

The Hunger Fighter Challenge is a community food and fund drive comprised of businesses, organizations, schools and other teams during the holiday season. Anyone can put together a Hunger Fighter team. Each team has its own approach to raising food and funds. We truly appreciate the creativity and enthusiasm of all of our participants!

Not only does the Hunger Fighter Challenge bring in much-needed food, it also educates people about how hunger is a global issue and how we can all help to end it. The



On-A

Another effort is a... during the... hosted by... in partner... Each day, different g... the county... with vario... members... work. In a... festive atr... people to... the oppo... community... and have f...

Cowboy Convoy

A great family-friendly event - the annual Cowboy Canned Food Convoy on Saturday, November 23, - officially kicks-off our Holiday Spirit Food & Fund Drive. During the event, the Redwood Unit of the Backcountry Horsemen of Northern California travels on horseback across Eureka with saddle bags of nutritious food to donate to the food bank. Once the riders arrive, staff and community members feed the horses apples and carrots while they unload hundreds of pounds of food.

Join Us!

There are many ways to participate in our Holiday Spirit Food & Fund Drive this season and even more reasons to do so. Food for People is blessed by the generosity of organizations and individuals that regularly contribute to our holiday efforts. Every can, every dollar, and every hour you donate makes a big difference. Interested in hosting your own holiday food drive, but don't know where to begin? Just let us know and we'll give you some ideas and resources to make it happen.

Thank you for your support. Wishing you and yours a happy holiday season!



KHUM DJ Cam interviews Food for People's Anne Holcomb live on air at Murphy's

Thank You to our Sponsors!

Times Standard



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Cooking Classes

Let's Get Canning

By Kayla Watkins, Nutrition Education Coordinator

Food for People Nutrition Education is always seeking ways to help our program participants make the most out of the food they have and receive. In addition to teaching people new cooking and food preparation skills, we also help them hone the ones they already have. One of the ways we do this is by collaborating with local groups like the University of California Cooperative Extension Master Food Preservers of Humboldt/Del Norte.

Master Food Preservers receive extensive training in food preservation and safe food handling practices, to ensure the integrity of the preserved product. Their classes are offered across Humboldt County and cover a variety of topics including safe canning, pickling, fermenting, freezing, and dehydrating. The skills and techniques taught in these canning classes are valuable for your own household and the community in which you live. Not to mention, most participants leave class with a tasty treat to share with family and friends!

Food for People is always looking for potential partners to help support our nutrition education efforts. Interested in helping or learning more? **Contact our Nutrition Education Coordinator Kayla Watkins at (707) 445-3166 ext. 305 or kwatkins@foodforpeople.org for upcoming educational opportunities or to share your ideas for future class topics.**



(Top right) Master Food Preserver Ilene Harris gets ready to can jam. (Bottom left) Participants gather around a table to learn about food preservation.

Advocacy Corner

Protecting SNAP for Californians

By Heidi McHugh, Community Education & Outreach Coordinator

Earlier this year, the United States Department of Agriculture proposed a federal rule to eliminate Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) for the purposes of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, known as CalFresh in California) eligibility.

BBCE offers access to SNAP for households whose costs of living are high, allows people to slowly reduce their SNAP benefits as their income increases, connects families to free and reduced-price school meals, and allows households to maintain modest savings. If this proposal becomes law, it is estimated that 3 million Americans will lose benefits, including more than 120,000 California households. Additionally, nearly 1 million children will no longer be automatically enrolled in free school meals. (For more details please read Proposed SNAP Changes to Increase Hunger, Food Notes August 2019.)

Food for People encouraged community members to voice their opinions through the public comment submission period that is legally required for these rule change proposals. Every comment is to be read and “considered” (more on that later) in assessing if the rule will move forward or remain unchanged. Our partners at the California Association of Food Banks provided us with postcards that we displayed in our Eureka Choice Pantry so that interested volunteers and community members could write their comments. Read some of their messages below:

- *I am in school and I can use (SNAP) to be a success and I oppose this.*
- *As a retired teacher, I know that SNAP is a lifeline for so many children. Do NOT do this!*
- *This is not a good idea; I will starve if I'm not on SNAP.*
- *We are a three-income family of four and we would go hungry without SNAP.*
- *Any change would adversely impact those most in need; seniors and other low-income people.*
- *SNAP is a godsend to children, seniors, and people who work 2 or 3 jobs to try to support their family. It's troubling that people who have enough resources would try to take this away from people who need more.*

The BBCE proposal's public comment period ended on September 23rd with more than 75,000 comments submitted: 70 from mayors and 17 from governors, including California Governor Gavin Newsom. Congressional delegations from Vermont, Maryland, and Maine, and the Congressional Black Caucus voiced opposition to changing eligibility rules for SNAP. The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors was one of three California counties, along with San Francisco and Santa Clara, to officially oppose the proposal.

The USDA will read all 75,000 comments and “consider potential changes from the proposal in crafting the final rule,”

eventually make a difference if lawyer rule. For example, you may have h on Public Charge Grounds” rule criteria for who can be considered U.S. government for benefits, re ineligible for green cards and a pat than 266,000 public comments we of this rule, and now many of t utilized as part of diverse legal s the changes. Similarly, Food for Pe against the BBCE proposal has be for the Western Center on Law an it describes the additional impac endure when programs like SNAP go to court should this rule move

As I write this article, an SNAP benefits has been published SNAP program to recognize the SNAP applicant household and based on the Standard Utility Allo

"If this rule is enacted, people will be hungry just to keep cool during scorching summers and"

the State and approved in the Sta allows variances in SUAs to accor utility costs and rates, and allows s calculate those costs. The proposed those calculations across the cour amount lower than what would be of utilities for many Californians. change is estimated to result in cut billion over a five-year period. Ar Government Affairs for the Calif Banks says of the new proposal: “C the frontlines of hunger and know trade-offs that low-income familie paying for basic needs like high util every proposed cut to SNAP, an awareness during this public com meal the charitable sector provide banks and our partners cannot ma rule is enacted, people will go hung scorching summers and warm in w

Please consider making you comment, visit our website at w

Tribute & Memorial Contributions

You can honor a friend or family member by making a donation to Food for People. Simply add a notation to your gift. If you include an address, we'll send a card to let that person know about the donation. It is a great way to celebrate and/or honor the memory of someone you love.

In Honor Of

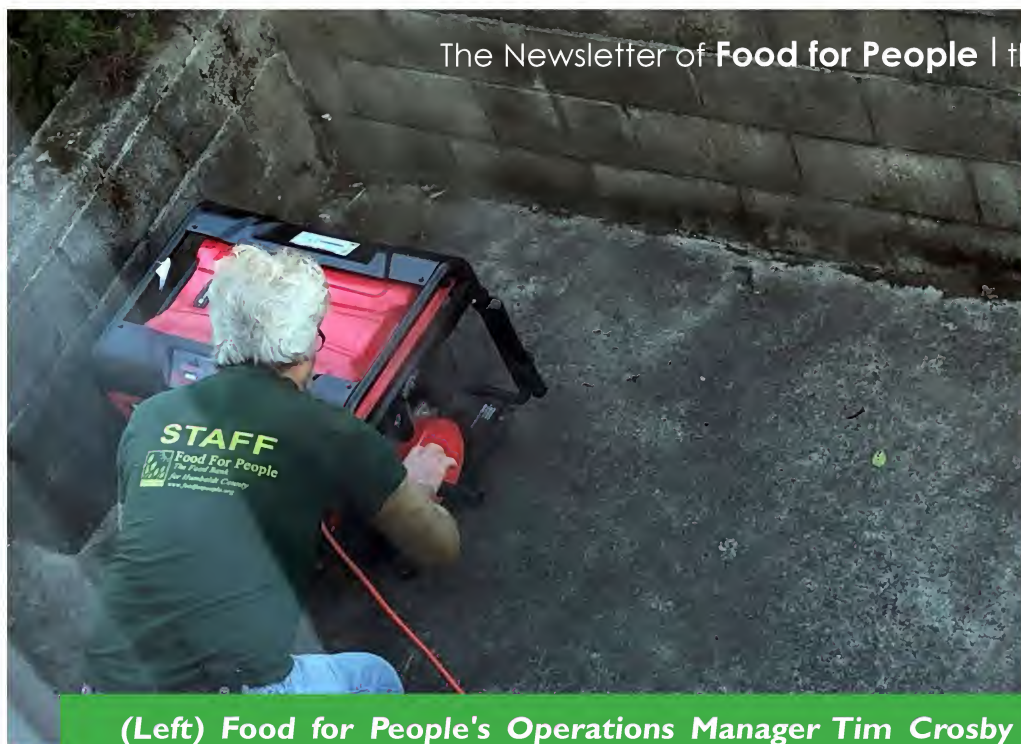
Larry Hensley

In Memory Of

April Conant
Arnold Souza
Dorothy Stringer
Harold & Florence Mayer
Herb Childers
Harold & Jean Fisher
Jay and Laurey Sullivan
Ken Collins
Mark Pelley
Melanie Kuhnel
Mrs. Mahan



Become a



(Left) Food for People's Operations Manager Tim Crosby fills a generator. Extension cords run from the generator to reach refrigeration in the Choice Pantry.

Power Shutdown Food for People's Response

By Anne Holcomb, Executive Director

With less than 6 hours' notice during "regular business hours" to prepare for what was predicted to be up to 5-7 days without power, our team jumped into action. Our goal was to keep all programs countywide operational. Staff waited in long lines at gas pumps to make sure the gas tanks in our two trucks and five vans were full in case of an extended outage. Many of our distributions are one to two hours away and fuel is needed to reach all sites during the outage. We were also scrambling (alongside local grocery stores) to obtain large quantities of dry ice to keep our freezers at temp.

We then rolled out our 9500 kw generator, extension cords, lanterns and flashlights and made sure program staff had paper forms to use while computers were down. We don't have a generator large enough to power our walk-in cooler and freezers so we put 500 lbs. of dry ice into the freezers and put them on lockdown to keep them cold for as long as possible. We took stock of other perishable items to determine how long we could keep them cold with dry ice and strategize how to get them out quickly and safely.

I'm pleased to report that all of our programs remained operational despite having no phone service, internet, or electricity! On the day of the outage, we used our generator to power the refrigeration in the Choice Pantry and pushed out

waste; the Mobile Production as scheduled; 479 Backpacks assembled for 21 sites; completed for upcoming program distributions in. Unfortunately we can't it had to be shut off at night, spoilage, but it was minimal. eggs and gave 75 dozen which they used for a distribution.

Now we are preparing members who will be coming they lost due to spoilage. Social Security checks for the month and many had a large shopping trip prior to the loss could be significant. the word out about Cal for food that was lost with to apply.

In many ways this disaster preparation was an actual disaster. Backup coolers and freezers are to integrate them with something businesses are to explore for outages or it will inspire us all to prepare



(Top left) Eureka volunteer Diana Simas brought along her toy poodle Coco to partake in the festivities. Fortunado Kemp and other volunteers enjoy delicious food provided by Amigas Burritos; (bottom right) Fortunado Kemp plays a game of giant Jenga with his grandson Lane.

Volunteer Appreciation Party

Food, Fun & Friends

By Arianne Aryanpur

In early October, Food for People hosted a volunteer appreciation party at Sequoia Park in Eureka, to recognize the outstanding work of our amazing volunteers.

The afternoon event included food, games and much more! It was truly a fun way to recognize the countless hours our volunteers spend each day ensuring our many programs run smoothly. Without their service, we would not be able to serve the 12,000 children, seniors, and family members we do each month – thank you!

Last year alone, our volunteers spent more than 21,000 hours sorting and distributing food, packing or delivering senior food bags, harvesting produce, interviewing and assisting program participants, helping with clerical tasks, and much more! Close to 400 volunteers served our community each month!

Interested in giving back? Food for People is always looking for volunteers to help support our many programs. Whether you prefer clerical tasks, group activities or physical labor, we offer a variety of options to meet your specific skills and interests.

Ready to find the volunteer opportunity that works best for you? Please contact our Direct Services Manager Belma Homero at volunteer@foodforpeople.org



Volunteers

The holiday season is a great time to reflect on our blessings and be thankful for what we have. For Food for People, we are grateful for the continued support of our community. We recently caught up with some of our amazing volunteers to ask how they got involved with Food for People and what they love about volunteering. Read some of their answers below:



"All of my kids are finally in school now. My daughter did the canned food drive in high school and loved it. I've been wanting to volunteer here ever since then."

– Laurel



"This community has been good to me -- I started a business here -- so it is nice to be able to give back to a community that has given me so much."

– Miguel



"It makes me feel like I can be out there [during the holidays] and help out."

THANK YOU HUMBOLDT COUNTY!

Your support has raised more than \$21,000 for

Backpacks for Kids
for Eureka School Children

No child learns well on an empty stomach - It affects how they learn and develop.

Backpacks for Kids provides a bag full of nutritious food for children in need on the weekends for the school year.

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		Thrifty Supply Company		Neal & Barbara Carnam		Marilyn I. Hofstra
		Phyllis Rudzitis		Anonymous		Douglas J. RN RCH

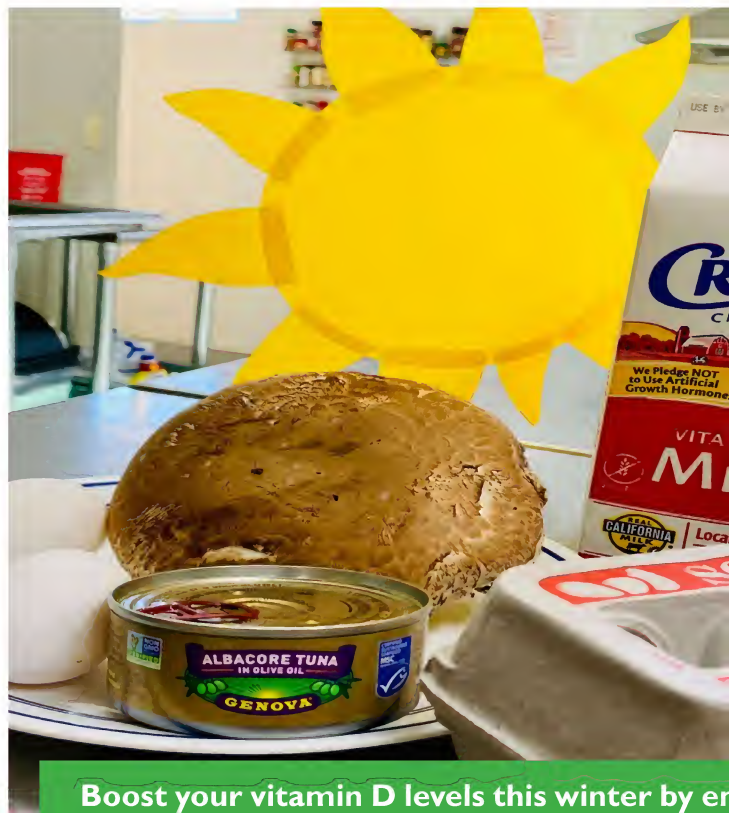
Boost Your Vitamin D Intake

Cheese, Eggs and Mushrooms, Oh My!

By Kayla Watkins, Nutrition Education Coordinator

Vitamin D, as most of us know, is vital to our bone health. But do we truly understand the impact that it can have on our bodies if we are deficient? The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics states that vitamin D not only transports and regulates minerals such as calcium and phosphorus to the bones, but it also plays a crucial role in the brain's ability to communicate through the nerves to the rest of the body, and wards off bacteria and viruses. According to some research, low vitamin D may even be linked to depression and other mood disorders.

The most efficient way to increase your body's vitamin D is through short periods of sun exposure. Did you know that when your skin is exposed to direct sunlight, it is able to create vitamin D on its own? Unfortunately, as the winter months approach, it's not always possible to receive the benefits from the sun. There is still hope! By increasing your consumption of vitamin D-rich foods like fatty fish, beef liver, cheese, eggs, and mushrooms you can ensure you get enough of the "sunshine vitamin" even when the sun isn't shining. Vitamin D-fortified orange juice, yogurt, and soy beverages are also good options. As always, remember to check the nutrition facts!



Boost your vitamin D levels this winter by eating foods like mushrooms, fatty

CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP

Ingredients:

5 cups sliced mushrooms
1 1/2 cups chicken or veggie broth
1 medium yellow onion, diced
3 tbsp all-purpose flour
3 tbsp butter
1/8 tsp dried thyme
1 cup half and half

Directions:

1. In a large, heavy saucepan, cook mushrooms in broth with onion until tender (about 10-15 minutes).
2. In a blender or food processor, puree the mixture, leaving some chunks.
3. In the saucepan, melt the butter and whisk in the flour until smooth. Add the puree, salt, pepper and half and half, and vegetable puree. Stirring constantly, cook until thickened. Adjust seasonings to taste, add sherry.

Bruce Wayne Joins Board

A Longtime Volunteer & Supporter



Bruce Wayne helps set out fresh produce during a Senior Distribution at Food for People in Eureka.

Long-time Food for People volunteer Bruce Wayne has joined our Board.

A retired trial attorney with 30 years of experience in business, Bruce is on the Board of Directors of Food for People Services and the Legal Aid Society. He is involved in the Trinidad Community Center and has volunteered at Food for People for many years.

"Bruce's many years of extensive community involvement and his work make him a wonderful addition to the Board," said Anne Holcomb, Food for People's Executive Director. "He has become very familiar with our service as a volunteer in our warehouse and will continue to serve as a board member."

Wayne joins a board team that includes retired educators, health care professionals, business and non-profit leaders. For more information, visit foodforpeople.org/about/board.

Be Prepared: Make Your Five Minute Plan

Last year, California had one of the deadliest and most destructive fire seasons ever, with more than 1.8 million acres burned. Following the events earlier this month, we have all seen firsthand the impact a planned power outage can have on our rural community. It is important we all take the time now to make sure our families and homes are prepared for emergencies.

Pacific Gas & Electric Company is working to better prepare communities for wildfires and disasters. Food for People is working with PG&E to get the word out, and we hope it makes all of the difference in keeping everyone safe.

We urge everyone to prepare a Five Minute Plan to evacuate their homes immediately, and watch for Red Flag Warnings. Evacuation orders means you have to leave right away to avoid getting stuck. Preparing a Five Minute Plan gets your family ready to go quickly once you are ordered to leave. There are steps that must be taken in order to be able to leave in 5 minutes.

- Mark evacuation routes on maps
- Plan where to go if you can't go home
- Put together an emergency supply kit

WHAT IS A FIVE MINUTE PLAN

A Five Minute Plan gets you ready to leave the house in 5 minutes.



Mark evacuation routes on a map



Plan where to go if you can't go home



Explain the plan to young children

WHAT GOES IN AN EMERGENCY KIT





First Aid Kit



Important Documents